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## HOME.

Oh, if there be on earth a spot  
Where life's tempestuous waves rage not,  
Or if there be a charm, a joy,  
Without satiety or alloy—  
Or if there be a feeling fraught  
With every fond and pleasing thought,  
Or if there be a hope that lives  
On the pure happiness it gives—  
That envy touches not—where strife  
Ne'er mingles with the cup of life;  
Or if there be a word of bliss,  
Of peace, of love, of happiness—  
Or if there be a refuge fair,  
A safe retreat from toil and care,  
Where the heart may find a dwelling find,  
A store of many joys combined,  
Where every feeling, every tone,  
Best harmonizes with its own,  
Whence its vain wishes ne'er can rove,  
Oh, it is HOME!—a home of love!

## THE PAST AND NEW YEAR.

BY CHIEF JUSTICE MELLE, OF MAINE.

The close of the year, whose last knell is heard, amid the chills and gloom of winter, when all around reminds us of our departed friends and the loss we have sustained, is peculiarly adapted to arouse us from our inattention to the lapse of time, and impress on our hearts the solemn truth that life itself is but a vapor. Many, it is true, when they look into the grave of the year, may experience a rush of bitter feeling, as they fondly recollect how many cherished hopes they have been called upon to bury in the tomb, during the lapse of the year; how many friends have proved false or ungrateful—how many of their suns have gone down in the gloom of solitude, or amidst scenes of sickness and poverty, or of sighing and sorrow. All this is true, and such ever has been and ever will be the complexion of human life. But though thousands are thus educated in a school where such is the salutary discipline; yet millions have been spending the year in peace and joy—in health and abundance. Their journey has been gladdened with sunshine, and their course has been through fields of beauty and beside the still waters of comfort. It is useful—it is a species of gratitude thus to look back and trace the course we have been pursuing. If it has been delightful or smooth and peaceful, our hearts should melt in tenderness while we look to the fountain of all our blessings. If our course has been wearisome through fields of sterility, or melancholy and companionship, we should remember that Wisdom and Goodness preside over our destinies, whether we are breasting the storm, or calmly beholding the rainbow of promise. The year that is bidding us adieu, was pleasant in its course, and its decline gradual and beautiful. An unusual degree of softness distinguished its autumn, resembling the last year of the life of man, when the agitation of the passion has in a great measure subsided; when his feelings have become tranquilized, and all around him peaceful and serene, if he has been careful to regulate his conduct, on life's journey, by the principles of justice and the commands of duty—if in his social intercourse his passions have been preserved in due subjection to the gentle influences of a benevolent heart, displaying itself in acts of mercy like the good Samaritan.

"Sure the last end  
Of the good man is peace. How calm his exit!  
Night dew falls not more gently on the ground,  
Nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft."

The new year to which we are just to be introduced is in one sense, a perfect stranger, though we have long been intimate with the family to which it belongs, and of course have some general acquaintance with certain features of its character, leading us to anticipate its promises and its failure to perform them in many instances—its smiles and its tears—its flatteries and its frowns—its gaieties and hopes—its gradual decline—decay and dissolution; but we have abundant reason too for indulging the belief that we may enjoy thousands of blessings, if we are disposed to cherish proper feelings—to be kind and courteous and obliging, and ever on our guard to avoid unnecessarily wounding the feelings of others; ever ready to acknowledge the favors we receive, and render a suitable return.

How easily all this may be done? How often is it grossly neglected! He who consults his own ease and comfort cannot in any manner attain the desired result so readily and certainly, as by habitually consulting the ease and comfort of others, with whom he is in the habit of associating; and this is true politeness also. A man who is dissatisfied with himself and those around him, and laboring under the darkening influence of disturbed or morose feelings, may travel from Dan to Beersheba and say it is all barren;—to him it will appear so, and the effect would be the same if his journey lay amidst the most delightful scenes of rural beauty. The seasons of the year all give their annual lessons for instruction: It is our wisdom to regard them carefully. Spring summons us all to cheerful activity, with assurances that our labor will not be in vain. Summer performs what Spring had promised, and shows us the advantage of listening to early instruction and wisely improving it. Ten thousand songsters are filling the branches with their animating strains of music and gratitude, and teaching us to enjoy, as they do, the countless blessings and bounties of nature; their music is never failing—nor do we see it ending in discords. Let us all, as we journey onward together through the year, learn to tune our hearts as they do their voices, and pass the fleeting period in harmony, and in that cheerfulness which the excellent Addison has honored with the name of a continual expression of gratitude to Heaven. In Germany the study and practice of music are general among the people. Besides other advantages resulting from making music a part of common education, it is not romantic or utopian to observe that it

teaches how easily music—pure and surpassing music—may be made on the same instrument, which under an ignorant or purposed touch will send forth discords in prodigious varieties. He who has become acquainted with the instrument, though not a master of it well knows how to avoid those combinations of sound which are painful to the ear, and often tend to disturb feelings and passions. What tones are sweeter than those produced by the gentle breeze of heaven, passing over the strings of the Aeolian Harp? The reason is, those strings are so attuned as that their vibrations, will not respond except in notes of harmony; but only disorder the strings, by increasing the tension of some and decreasing that of others, and the sweetest zephyr will produce nothing but the vilest discords, resembling angry passions. Let us then, in our journey through the year on which we have entered, acquire as much possible a knowledge of the science and the art of social and domestic moral music. Let us learn to measure our time with care to cultivate our voices, that they may lose all harshness; let each attend to his own part, and strive to excel in that. Let us consider our feelings, passions and dispositions, as the strings of the Harp; and the ordinary events of life as the breezes which give vibration to the string; if these strings—our feelings, passion and dispositions—are in proper tune—under due regulation, and preserving a just relation, each to all the others, we have then all the elements of moral music, domestic and social, and in a few weeks, by due regard to all the principles and arrangement above mentioned, we shall soon be good scholars, giving and receiving all that pleasure which harmony can afford, and as the sober autumn advances, our tastes for his kind of music will be more and more ripened towards perfection; and when the cold December evenings shall arrive, we can listen to the angry music of the elements abroad, full of discordant strains, sweeping by our peaceful homes, while within them all may be the music of the heart, in its gentlest movements.

It is a melancholy truth that we ourselves manufacture seven-eighths of what we are disposed to term our misfortunes in this world. Want of precaution mars our arrangements; want of prudence exposes us to dangers which we might easily have avoided—want of patience often hurries us into difficulties, and disqualifies us to bear them with calmness or decency. Indulgence in follies and fashions often plants the seeds of waste and disease. Intemperance in our passions always is followed by unwelcome sensations, and sometimes with a sense of shame. Stimulants are succeeded by debility, and when they are used to excess, we know and daily witness the dreadful results—if death is not one of them—either the death of the offender, or of some other destroyed by his hand in the tempest of infuriated passions—we are too often compelled to mourn over the desolation they occasion—presenting in one view.

"Hate—grief—despair—the family of pain."

—Sore pinched by wintry winds,  
How many sink into the sordid but  
Of cheerless poverty!

In the midst of the merriment and mirth making of the Christmas season, let the pleading voice of the bereaved and poor, be heard by the gay and rejoicing sons and daughters of prosperity. How the wind howls at the window, as if angry at my careless comfort, at my thoughtlessness of the shivering, starving poor! Or does it call me with its hoarse blustering impatience to look out upon the driving storm, that I may be reminded of my hard heartedness to the wretched inmates of the hovels, into which the angry tempest spirit is rushing with his keen, keen, cold. Ah!

How many eat the bitter, bitter bread  
Of misery!

The poor widow sits close to her hungry children, who are hovering, about those few embers on the hearth of that open room, while her hands, stiff with the cold, urge the vain effort to procure with her needle the necessities of life for herself, and her orphans. That rude, rude blast that makes her whole frame shudder, reminds her of the awful visitation that swept away her husband, her property, and her earthly comfort. Poor, lone, widowed one! My heart bleeds for thee! Thou hast seen better days! But now—Nay, hard hearted as I am, I cannot endure even to remind myself of what thou now art. Pale, shivering one, what is thy crime, that thou art thus deserted by those that called thee friend, and enjoyed thy hospitality? Why has society shut against thee the fountain of its sympathies, and denied thee by a secret, silent and heartless compact, half the compensation for thy unremitted toil, that is eagerly offered for the fitful services of the rougher and less dependent sex? What fatal stain of guilt cuts off thy friendless children from their former supply of apparel and little gifts suited to this, the child's own season of the year? Why must thou be doomed to hear the sweet lips of thy prattlers shout eagerly "Christmas gift!" and thou have nothing to bestow but a bitter, briny tear? Here are my children with their new clothes and cheerful, laughing, expecting countenances—and here are the several little presents suited to their respective ages; and when the eve of Christmas comes, they will scarce tarry in their nightly rest, for the eagerness of their spirits in anticipation of the blessed, joyous morning. But thy poor orphans must be content with their long-worn and scanty vestments, and instead of presents and rejoicings, must hear thee say "Ah! my children, this is not like the Christmas we used to have when your poor father was alive!" Thou lone, lone, sufferer, thou shalt have a part of my little morsel, and thou shalt have a part of my fervent prayer. God shield thee, widow, with thy helpless orphans, God shield thee! O that Christians would remember the character of Him, whose advent into our world they celebrate; that they would remember that he loved the poor.

**ONLY TWO DISEASES.** "After all," says a witty French physician, "there are only two diseases in the world; one of which you die, and another of which you don't."

**INFLUENCE OF CITIES.**—By associating in large masses, as in camps and cities, talents are improved and the mind strengthened, but virtue is impaired and morality weakened.

## A CHAPTER FROM THE YOUNG MAN'S GUIDE BY W. A. ALCOCK.

### SECTION III. On Books and Study.

I will now mention a few of the particular studies to which he who would educate himself for usefulness should direct his attention.

#### 1. GEOGRAPHY.

As it is presumed that every one whom I address reads newspapers more or less, I must be permitted to recommend that you read them with a good map of every quarter of the world before you, and a geography and correct gazetteer at hand. When a place is mentioned observe its situation on the map, read an account of it in the gazetteer, and a more particular description in the geography. Or if you choose to go through with the article, and get some general notions of the subject, and afterwards go back and read it a second time, in the manner proposed, to this I have no objection.

Let me insist, strongly, on the importance of this method of reading. It may seem slow at first; but believe me, you will be richly repaid in the end. Even in the lyceum, where the subject seems to demand it, and the nature of the case will admit, it ought to be required of lecturers and disputants, to explain every thing in passing, either by reference to books themselves on the spot, or by maps, apparatus, diagrams &c.; with which, it is plain, that every lyceum ought to be furnished. The more intelligent would lose nothing, while the less so, would gain much by this practice. The expense of these things, at the present time, is so trifling, that no person, or association of persons, whose object is scientific improvement, should, by any means, dispense with them.

No science expands the mind of a young man more, at the same time that it secures his cheerful attention, than geography—I mean if pursued in the foregoing manner. Its use is so obvious that the most stupid cannot fail to see it. Much is said, I know, of differences of taste on this, as well as every other subject; but I can hardly believe that any young person can be entirely without taste for geographical knowledge. It is next to actual travels; and who does not delight in seeing new places and new objects?

#### 2. HISTORY.

Next in order as regards both interest and importance, will be a knowledge of history, with some attention at the same time to chronology. Here, too, the starting point will be the same as in the former case. Some circumstance or event mentioned at the lyceum, or in the newspaper, will excite curiosity, and lead the way to inquiry. I think it well, however, to have but one leading science in view at a time; that is, if geography be the object, let history and almost every thing else be laid aside for that time, in order to secure, and hold fast the geographical information which is needed. After a few weeks or months, should he wish to pursue history, let the student, for some time confine himself chiefly, perhaps exclusively, to that branch.

The natural order of commencing and pursuing this branch without an instructor, and I think in schools also, is the following. For example, you take up a book, or it may be a newspaper, since these are swarming every where at the present time, and you read that a person has just deceased, who was at Yorktown, in Virginia, during the whole siege, in the American Revolution. I am supposing here that you have already learned where Yorktown is; for geography, to some extent at least, should precede history; but if not, I would let it pass for a moment, since we cannot do every thing at once, and proceed to inquire about the siege, and revolution. If you have any books whatever, on history, within your reach, do not give up the pursuit till you have attained a measure of success. Find out when the siege in question happened, by whom, and by how many thousand troops it was carried on; and who and how many the besieged were.

He who follows out this plan, will soon find his mind reaching beyond the mere events alluded to in the newspaper, both forward and backward. As in the example already mentioned, for I cannot think of a better;—What were the consequences of this siege?—Did it help to bring about peace, and how soon?—And did the two nations ever engage in war afterwards?—If so, how soon, and with what results? What became of the French troops and of the good La Fayette? This would lead to the study of French history for the last forty years. On the other hand, where had Washington and La Fayette and Cornwallis been employed, previous to the siege of Yorktown? What battles had they fought, and with what success? What led to the quarrel between Great Britain and the United States? &c. Thus we should naturally go backward, step by step, until we should get much of modern history clustered around this single event in the siege of Yorktown. The same course should be pursued in the case of any other event, either ancient or modern. If newspapers are not thus read, they dissipate the mind, and probably do about as much harm as good.

It is deemed disgraceful—and ought to be—for any young man at this day to be ignorant of the geography and history of the country in which he lives. And yet it is no uncommon occurrence. However it argues much against the excellence of our systems of education, that almost every child should be carried apparently through a wide range of science, and over the whole material universe, and yet know nothing, or next to nothing, practically, of his own country.

#### 3. ARITHMETIC.

No young man is excusable who is destitute of a knowledge of Arithmetic. It is probable, however, that no individual will read this book, who has not some knowledge of the fundamental branches; numeration, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. But with these, every person has the key to a thorough acquaintance with the whole subject, so far as his situation in life requires. To avail himself of these keys to mathematical knowledge, he must pursue a course not unlike that which I have recommended in relation to geography and history. He must seize on every circumstance which occurs in his reading, where reckoning is required, and if possible, stop at once and compute it. Or if not, let the place be marked, and at the first leisure moment, let him turn to it, and make the estimates.

Suppose he reads of a shipwreck. The crew is said to consist of thirty men besides the captain and mate, and three hundred and thirteen passengers, and a company of sixty grenadiers. The captain and mate, and ten of the crew escaped in the long boat. The rest were drowned, except twelve of the grenadiers, who clung to a floating fragment of the wreck till they were taken off by another vessel. Now is there a single person in existence, who would read such an account, without being anxious to know how many persons in the whole were lost? Yet nine readers in ten would not know; and why? Simply because they will not stop to use what little addition and subtraction they possess.

I do not say that, in reading to a company, who did not expect it, a young man would be directed to stop and make the computation; but I do say that in all ordinary cases, no person is excusable who omits it, for it is a flagrant wrong to his mind. Long practice, it is true may render it unnecessary for an individual to pause, in order to estimate a sum like that above mentioned. Many, indeed most persons who are familiar with figures, might compute these numbers while reading, and without the slightest pause; but it certainly requires some practice. And the most important use of arithmetical studies (except as a discipline to the mind) is to enable us to reckon without slates and pencils. He has but a miserable knowledge of arithmetic, who is no arithmetician without a pen or pencil in his hand. These are but the ladders upon which he should ascend to the science, and not the science itself.

#### 4. CHEMISTRY AND OTHER NATURAL SCIENCES.

If I were to name one branch, as more important to a young man than any other, next to the merest elements of reading and writing—it would be chemistry. Not a mere smattering of it, however; for this usually does about as much harm as good. But a thorough knowledge of a few of the simple elements of bodies, and some of their most interesting combinations, such as are witnessed every day of our lives, but which, for want of a little knowledge of chemistry, are never understood; would do more to interest a young man in the business in which he may be employed, than almost any thing I could name. For there is hardly a single trade or occupation whatever, that does not embrace a greater or less number of chemical processes. Chemistry is of very high importance even to the gardener and the farmer.

There are several other branches which come under the general head of Natural Science, which I recommend to your attention. Such are Botany, or a knowledge of plants; Natural History, or a knowledge of animals; and Geology, or a general knowledge of the rocks and stones of which the earth on which we live is composed. I do not think these are equally important with the knowledge of chemistry, but they are highly interesting, and by no means without their value.

#### 5. GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION.

The foundation of a knowledge of Grammar is, in my view Composition; and composition, whether learned early or late, is best acquired by letter writing. This habit, early commenced, and judiciously but perseveringly followed, will in time, ensure the art not only of composing well, but also grammatically. I know this position is sometimes doubted, but the testimony is so strong, that the point seems to me fully established.

It is related in Ramsay's Life of Washington, that many individuals, who, before the war of the American Revolution, could scarcely write their names, became, in the progress of that war, able to compose letters which were not only intelligible and correct, but which would have done credit to a profound grammarian. The reason of this undoubtedly was, that they were thrown into situations where they were obliged to write much and often, and in such a manner as to be clearly understood. Perhaps the misinterpretation of a single doubtful word or sentence might have been the ruin of an army, or even of the cause. Thus they had a motive to write accurately; and long practice with a powerful motive before them, rendered them successful.

Nor is it necessary that motives so powerful should always exist, in order to produce this result—it is sufficient that there be a motive to write well, and to persevere in writing well. I have known several pedlars and traders, whose business led to the same consequences.

#### FARMERS.

There is no class in society so important to the welfare and the happiness of the community as farmers. Without their aid, even science and the arts would be neglected, and commerce and manufactures languish. Some of the most distinguished characters, whose lives have been handed down to us by history, have been Agriculturists. Abraham, the highly favored of God, and most of the ancient Patriarchs, had flocks and herds;—Cincinnatus was called from the plough to lead the armies of Rome to victory, and when her enemies were vanquished, he resigned all power and returned again to his rural occupations. In modern times our own Washington and our adopted La Fayette are on the list of farmers.

It is a mistaken idea that the farmers have no need of education, or no leisure for acquiring it. Knowledge is important to all human beings; as it enlarges the mind, and raises the thoughts above merely sensual gratification. Farmers have a better opportunity for attention to general education, than any other class. Professional men are obliged to confine their reading, in some measure, to their profession; mechanics generally labor through the whole of the year; and merchants are deeply immersed in business; while it is only the farmers who have five whole months of spare time in the season best calculated for intellectual improvement. Free from care and anxiety and surrounded by the comforts of life, which their farms afford, they may, if they will, with their families, store up rich treasures of history and biography; and become familiar with the people of other countries without departing from their own firesides. It would be highly beneficial to the interests of this country if larger numbers of men of wealth and learning should become farmers; they exert a healthy and stable influence on society, and the want of them no other class can supply. The lines in Goldsmith's Deserter Village are not only beautiful but true:

"Peace and lords may flourish or may fade,  
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;  
But a bold yeomanry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

## From the Family Magazine. A SINGULAR PRISON AMUSEMENT.

"Stripped, and re-clothed in rags which were dropping to pieces, his hands and feet heavily ironed, the prisoner was thrown into one of the most noisome dungeons of the fortress. A sprinkling of straw formed his bed; covering it had none. The only light and air which penetrated into this den of torment came through a loop hole, which narrowing gradually from the inside to the outside had a diameter of not more than five inches at the farthest extremity. This loop hole was secured and darkened by a fourfold iron grating, so ingeniously contrived that the bars of one network covered the interstices of another; but there was neither glass nor shutters to ward off the inclemency of the weather.

The interior extremity of this aperture reached within two feet and a half of the ground, and served the captive for a chair and table, and sometimes he rested his arms and elbows on it, to lighten the weight of his fetters. Shut out from all communication with his fellow beings, Latude found some amusement in the society of the rats which infested his dungeon.

His first attempt to make them companionable was tried upon a single rat, which in three days by gently throwing bits of bread to it, he rendered so tame that it would take food from his hands. The animal even changed its abode and established itself in another hole, in order to be near to him. In a few days a female joined the first comer. At the out-set she was timid; but it was not long before she acquired boldness, and would quarrel and fight for the morsels which were given by the prisoner. "When my dinner was brought in," says Latude, "I called my companions; the male ran to me directly; the female according to custom came slowly and timidly, but at length approached closer to me and ventured to take what I offered her from my hand. Some time after, a third appeared who was much less ceremonious than my first acquaintances. After his second visit he constituted himself one of the family, and made himself so perfectly at home that he resolved to introduce his comrades. The next day he came, with two others, who in the course of a week brought five more; and thus, in less than a fortnight, our family circle consisted of ten large rats and myself. I gave each of them names which they learned to distinguish. When I called them they came to eat with me, from the dish or off the same plate; but this I found unpleasant, and was soon forced to find them a dish for themselves, on account of their slovenly habits. They became so tame that they allowed me to scratch their necks, and appeared to me pleased when I did, but they would never permit me to touch the back. Sometimes I amused myself in making them play, and joined in their gambols. Occasionally I threw them a piece of meat scalding hot; the most eager to seize it, burned themselves, cried out, and left it; while the less greedy, who had waited patiently, took it when it was cold, and escaped into a corner, where they divided their prize: sometimes I made them jump up, by holding a piece of bread or meat suspended in the air." In the course of a year his four-footed companions increased to twenty-six. Whenever an intruder appeared he met with a hostile reception from the old standers, and had to fight his way, before he could obtain footing. Latude endeavored to familiarize a spider, but in this he was unsuccessful."

**WHAT SOME CALL LUCK.** One person will swallow penknives and yet live many years; while another, in eating, gets a small bit of liver in his windpipe and dies. One has the shaft of a gig passed completely through his body and recovers; another only runs a thorn in his hand and no skill can save him. One is thrown fifty or an hundred feet down a cliff, and survives; another has his neck broken, by a mere overturn in his gig, on a smooth plain. We have lately seen an aged and healthy minister who fell from the belfry of a common steeple to the ground, a few years ago; but we have also seen a lady die in consequence of falling down gently, on a level floor. So that the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle always to the strong.

**HANGING FOR SUICIDE.**—A young lady, just from school, who knew many things, and thought she knew many more—and who was particularly fond of high sounding words, of which she scarcely understood the meaning—sat very patiently hearing an account of the hanging of a person for house-breaking. Assuming, suddenly an air of importance, she observed; "Why, dear me, it is possible that people are ever hanged for any thing but suicide?"

**A GOOD ANSWER.**—A child of six years of age, being introduced into company for his extraordinary abilities, was asked by a dignified clergyman, "Where God was," with the proffer of an orange. "Tell (replied the boy) where he is not, and I will give you two."

## ENIGMA.

I am a word of 13 letters. My 1 13 11 5 3 is a scientific art. My 9 8 11 is to rest. My 1 9 10 2 signifies to be prudent. My 9 8 13 2 is a father. My 9 10 11 is a situation. My 9 5 2 3 4 is to render smooth. My 9 10 13 is a word of respect. My 9 5 3 6 is to part into threads. My 10 13 3 signifies anger. My 8 13 9 is a rainbow. My 10 13 4 is to be weary of anything. My 5 3 2 13 is a mechanical power. My 5 8 3 is to lean on. My 5 10 9 11 is to pay attention. My 2 4 3 signifies before. 3 6 2 is to watch. My 13 2 5 6 is to depend on. My 5 12 11 is a chance. My 5 12 9 2 is to fail. My 5 2 13 3 is a musical instrument. My 12 11 2 13 signifies above. My 13 8 2 11 is a religious ceremony. My 2 4 3 signifies also. My 5 12 7 4 is a passion. My 12 6 9 11 2 13 is a fish. My 13 12 11 is the last thing we all do. 2 7 3 is the close of the day. My 9 12 11 is a drunkard. My whole passes through the hands of a great many people.

W. F. B.

Washington, Dec. 24th.

**ANSWER TO ELIZABETH'S LAST ENIGMA.**  
Wing, A-hens, Shells, Nail, Illinois, Nest, Gin, Tunnel, Ocean, Net, Lion, Young, Cash, Eaton, Union, Mountain. "If you take the first letter of each of these words, you have the Washington Lyceum, a Society of which I have heard much that is praiseworthy, and of the merits of which I hope soon to judge personally. ELIZA.